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Introducing the JFSP Fire Science Delivery Network

Our Goal and Vision

An often-heard phrase is “use the best available science”. But managers often don’t know what information is already available nor the quality and applicability of that research to their management plans and projects. Another problem is the research may not be integrated in a context meaningful to management. And while the research may be of the highest quality and peer-reviewed, demonstration of science findings in the field is often lacking.

Everett M. Rogers, author of **Diffusion of Innovations** (Free Press-Simon & Schuster, 2003) states, “Getting a new idea adopted, even when it has obvious advantages, is difficult. Many innovations require a lengthy period of many years from the time when they become available to the time when they are widely adopted. Therefore, a common problem for many individuals and organizations is how to speed up the rate of diffusion of an innovation.”

The Joint Fire Science Program (JFSP) goal is to accelerate the awareness, understanding, and adoption of wildland fire science information by federal, tribal, state, local, and private stakeholders within ecologically similar regions. Our vision is a national collaborative science delivery network.

Guiding Principles

In addition, the Joint Fire Science Program Board of Governors established 6 guiding principles. They will:

1. be **inclusive**, making sure all relevant partners have the opportunity to be involved,
2. serve as **neutral** science partners,
3. be **customer driven**, both in how they are structured and how they function,
4. operate **collaboratively**, fostering joint management and science communication,
5. be **innovative**, pursuing new and creative ways to disseminate knowledge,
6. **facilitate** the flow in fire science information, dialogue of new science findings, and needs of resource managers and policymakers.

Key Objectives

Finally, there are six key objectives with supporting activities that could contribute to each objective. Proposals were not required to address all of these objectives, but were encouraged to address as many as can be effectively managed, or suggest additional objectives identified through interactions with practitioners and managers.

1. Dissemination of information and building relationships

It is essential that relationships be fostered between scientists, practitioners, and managers. A critical need is for regular, consistent, and timely dissemination of credible information tailored for the regional audience. This objective is central to building visibility, trust, and dialog among stakeholders in a region.

The JFSP encourages the following activities:

- Periodic alerts or newsletters
- Publish and disseminate publications to all stakeholders
- Develop, promote, and manage regional communities of practice to support peer-to-peer networking and knowledge exchange
- Develop and manage a regional, web-based NEPA aid that allows fuels and resource planners to quickly access relevant research results

2. Listing and describing existing research and synthesis information

Managers often are not aware of existing research, and research is often not conducted or presented in a form where practical management implications are obvious. The following activities could support this objective:

- Develop and maintain a regional, quick-reference web catalog of existing fire and fuels research results
- Develop and maintain a regional, geo-spatial web catalog of new and ongoing research projects
- Develop regional specific information in the Fire Effects Information System database

3. Methods to assess the quality and applicability of research

While it is important to collect and display existing information and research in progress, managers also need to understand the quality and strength of available evidence relevant to specific management questions. The JFSP is interested in further development of systematic evidence reviews that address important regional fire and fuels management questions.

4. Demonstrating research on the ground

The JFSP Governing Board believes that demonstrating application of research discoveries in the field is essential to the rapid understanding and adoption of wildland fire science information. These activities could support this objective:

- Develop and conduct regional in-the-field discussions to showcase recent fire research findings, demonstrate innovative practices, or highlight a fire research need
- Develop and manage a network of regional demonstration areas that highlight application of recent research findings

5. Adaptive management

The JFSP is interested in funding place-based adaptive management partnerships that promote adoption of fire science findings by fire, fuel, and land managers. The goal is to support a program of adaptive management activities in a specific place executed by a sustained science-management partnership. These activities could take any of the following forms, and are intended to be implemented as a coherent program rather than as unconnected, individual activities:

- Innovative project and/or landscape planning processes that illustrate application of recent fire science findings
- Application of innovative practices based on new science findings
- Monitoring project effectiveness and effects
- Management experiments implemented through ongoing fire and fuels management programs
- Outreach efforts to share results through field tours, workshops, publications, websites, or other suitable means

6. New research, synthesis, or validation needs

Each consortium should develop mechanisms where stakeholders can provide input about future fire and fuels research needs to the JFSP Governing Board. These priorities could then be considered for new research funding in support of the regional consortia. Regional consortia could develop and conduct

stakeholder roundtables to identify regional fire and fuels research needs, or identify specific questions and topics that might be included in systematic evidence reviews.

An Interagency Research, Development & Applications Partnership

